

Selecting Strong Imagery for Interpretive Stories

This webinar is sponsored by the Texas Historical Commission's Texas Heritage Trails Program in partnership with the Texas Association of Museums. This project was supported in part by funding through TxDOT's Statewide Transportation Enhancement Program.

Exhibitions are a Visual Medium



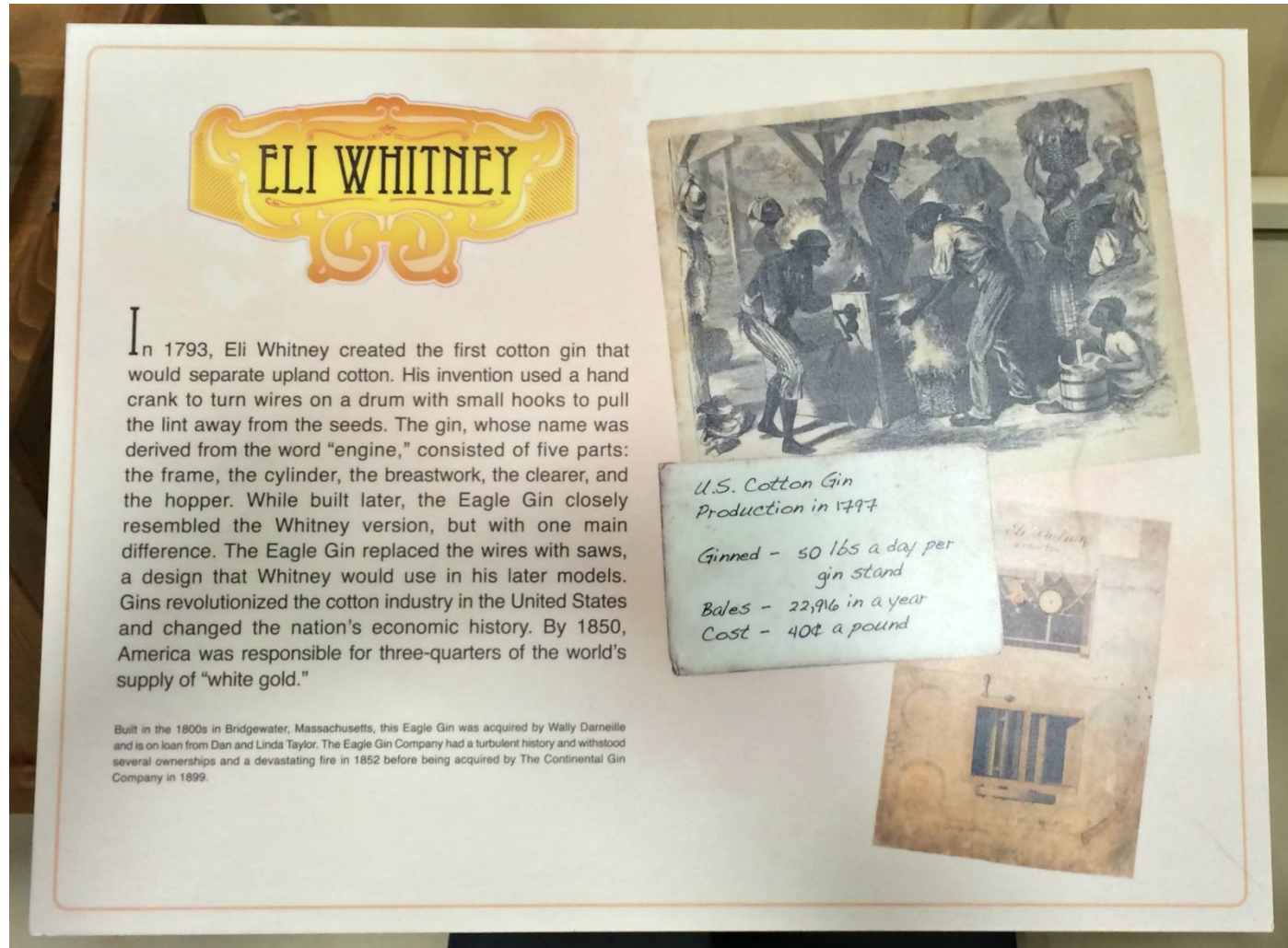
Settlement to City Museum, Grapevine, TX

Exhibits of All Kinds are Visual Media



Texas State Cemetery, Austin, TX

Exhibits of All Kinds are Visual Media



In 1793, Eli Whitney created the first cotton gin that would separate upland cotton. His invention used a hand crank to turn wires on a drum with small hooks to pull the lint away from the seeds. The gin, whose name was derived from the word "engine," consisted of five parts: the frame, the cylinder, the breastwork, the clearer, and the hopper. While built later, the Eagle Gin closely resembled the Whitney version, but with one main difference. The Eagle Gin replaced the wires with saws, a design that Whitney would use in his later models. Gins revolutionized the cotton industry in the United States and changed the nation's economic history. By 1850, America was responsible for three-quarters of the world's supply of "white gold."

Built in the 1800s in Bridgewater, Massachusetts, this Eagle Gin was acquired by Wally Darnelle and is on loan from Dan and Linda Taylor. The Eagle Gin Company had a turbulent history and withstood several ownerships and a devastating fire in 1852 before being acquired by The Continental Gin Company in 1899.

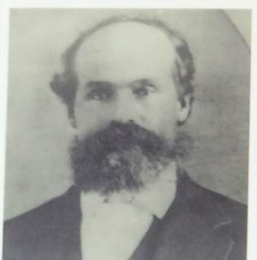
*U.S. Cotton Gin
Production in 1797
Ginned - 50 lbs a day per
gin stand
Bales - 22,916 in a year
Cost - 40¢ a pound*

Audience Expectations

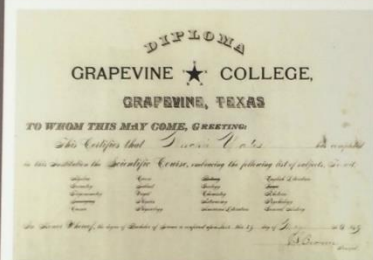


Visual Variety


A HIGHER EDUCATION




★ **L. P. SOLON DUNN** - The first school board in Grapevine was formed in 1869 for the Grapevine Masonic Institute. L. P. Solon Dunn served as one of the school's first trustees. He was also Grapevine's first postmaster.



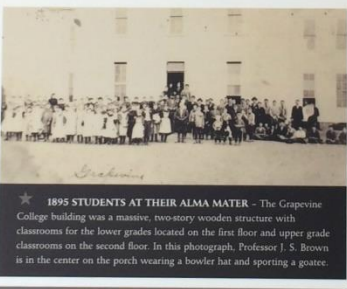
★ **WEECHIE YATES' DIPLOMA** - This 1899 diploma, signed by Professor J. S. Brown, certified that Weechie Yates completed the "Scientific Course" at Grapevine College. Upon graduation, students were ready for university admission or to begin their careers.




★ **WEECHIE YATES' GRADUATION PHOTO** - Weechie Yates, daughter of J. E. M. Yates and Kate Jenkins Yates, graduated from Grapevine College on May 19, 1899. She married Frank Estill, also a Grapevine College graduate, who entered the lumber and construction business with his father and built many schools in the area. Weechie became a local historian and author.




★ **GRAPEVINE COLLEGE BAND** - Members of the Grapevine College Band looked sharp in their uniforms and caps bearing the "GVC" emblem in this ca. 1895 photograph. Students received music instruction at Grapevine College for an additional tuition fee. Popular tunes of the day included marches by John Philip Sousa.



★ **1895 STUDENTS AT THEIR ALMA MATER** - The Grapevine College building was a massive, two-story wooden structure with classrooms for the lower grades located on the first floor and upper grade classrooms on the second floor. In this photograph, Professor J. S. Brown is in the center on the porch wearing a bowler hat and sporting a goatee.

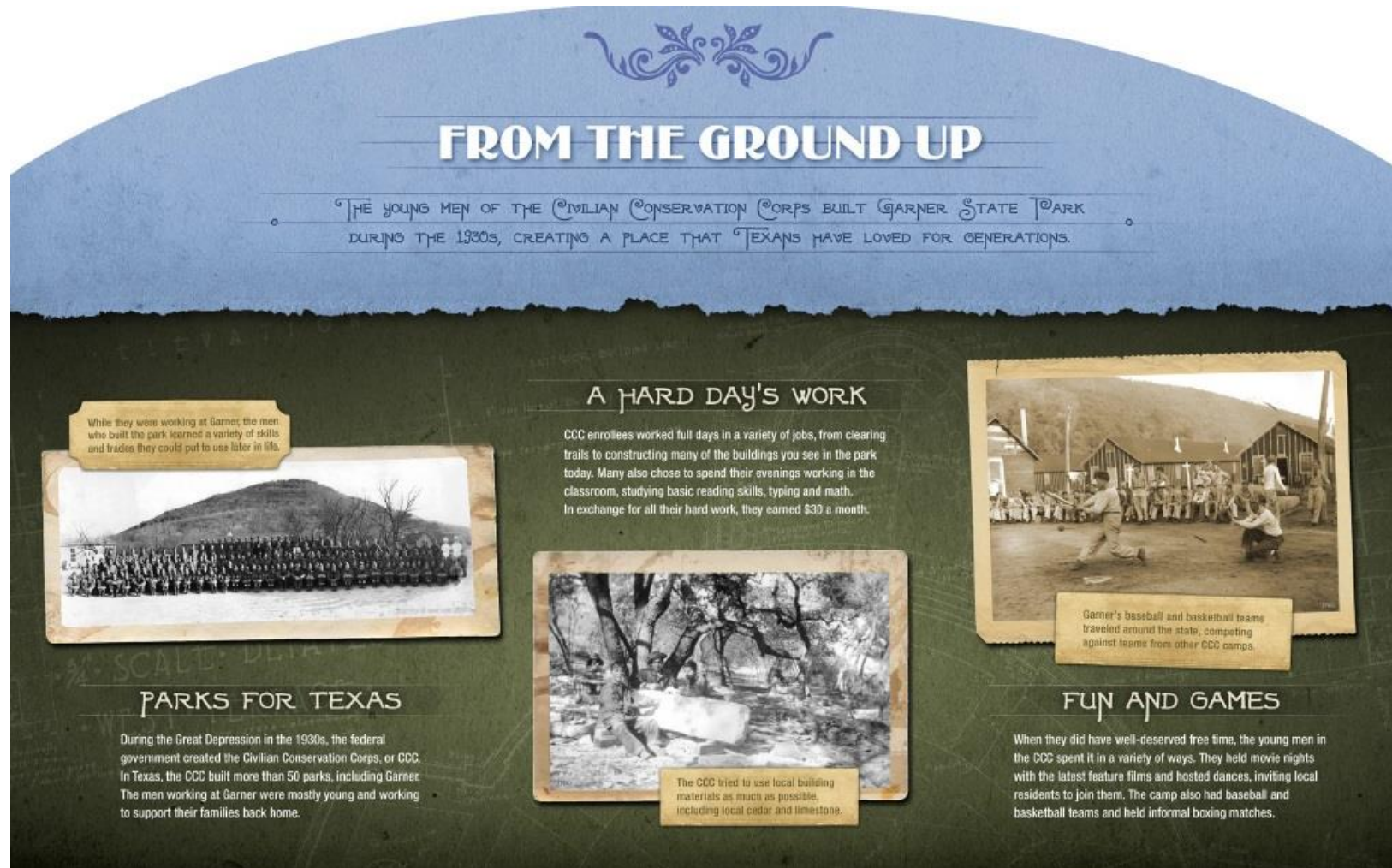


★ **1899 CLASS PICTURE** - Primary and grammar department students received a sound educational foundation at Grapevine College, which was considered one of the best-run schools in Tarrant County. Grapevine was prospering, and monthly tuition payments of \$2.50 and \$3 per student were gladly paid.



★ **RECYCLED FOUR TIMES AND STILL IN USE TODAY** - This East Texas long leaf pine board was brought to Grapevine in 1869 for the construction of the Grapevine Masonic Institute. It was recycled into the dormitory building of the Grapevine College, then into two Lucas family homes. Wood from the old school is highly valued and is still in use in a home at West College and Scribner Streets. This board was given to the museum by the current homeowner, Howard Wallfield.

Visual Variety



Outdoor interpretive sign, Garner State Park, Concan, TX

Choosing the Right Type of Visual

Step 1: Figure out what it is you're trying to communicate.

Step 2: Figure out which type of visual will best communicate that.

Step 3: Assess the quality of your options.

Step 4: Choose your visual.

Maps

The Basics

- ▶ Need to be reproduced at a scale large enough that people can see what it is you're interpreting.
- ▶ If necessary, it's okay to reproduce just a segment of a map.

Maps

Historical maps are good for giving people a snapshot of what a particular place looked like at a given time.



“Bird’s Eye View of the City of Austin,” by Augustus Koch, 1873, from Texas Bird’s-Eye Views, Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, TX

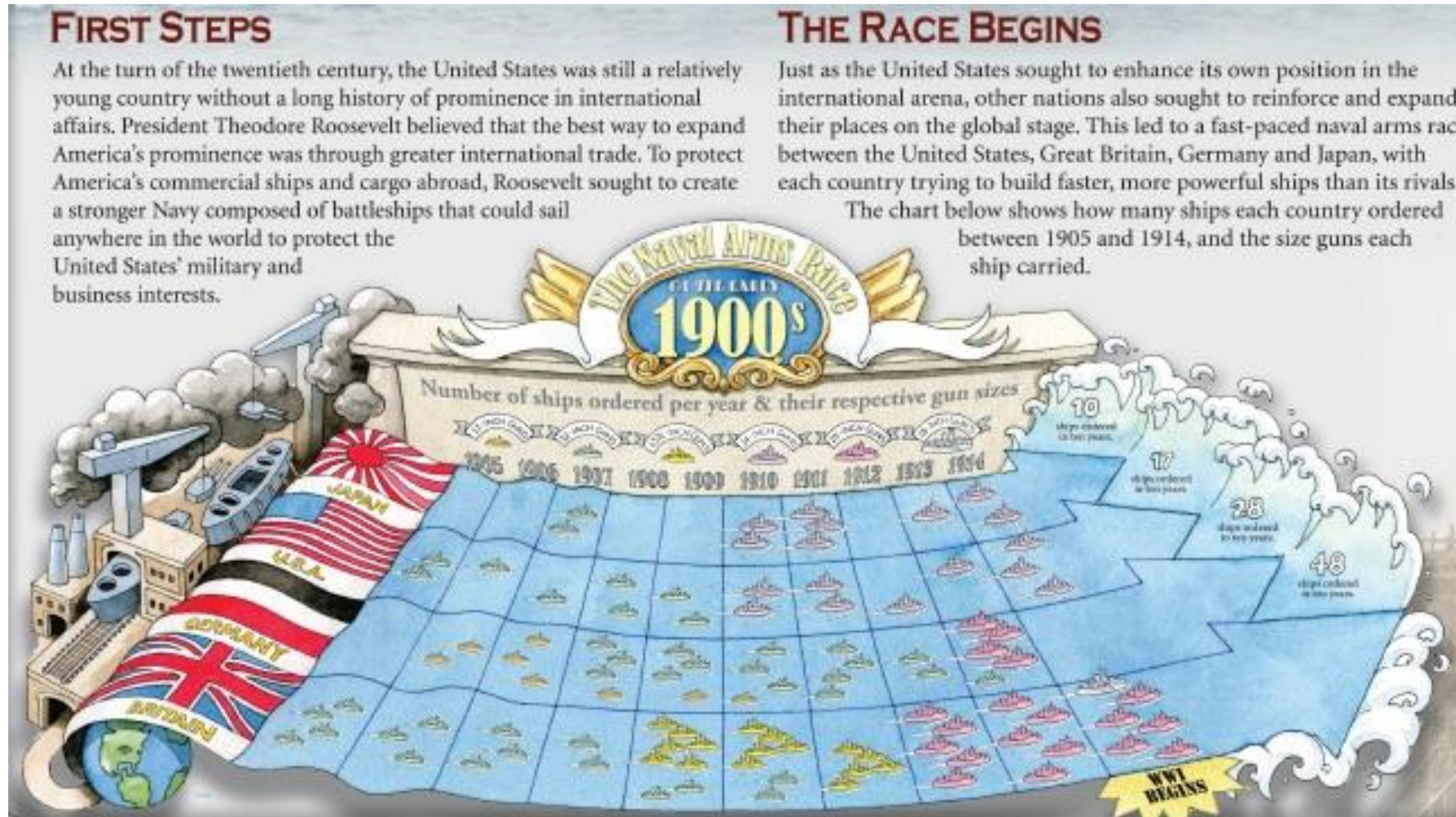
Maps

When historical maps are used together, they can also be used to show growth and change over time.

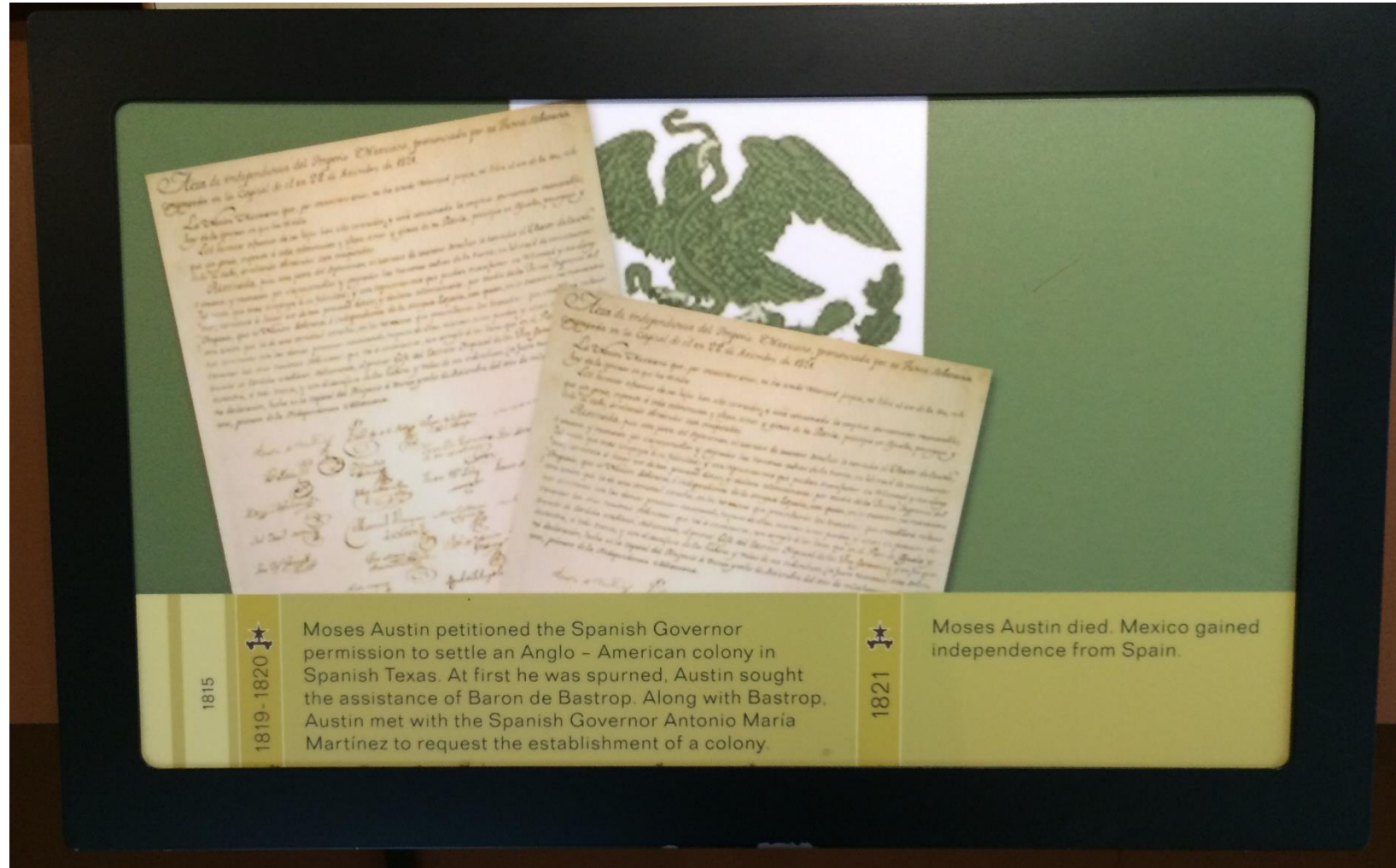


“Bird’s Eye View of the City of Austin,” by Augustus Koch, 1887, from Texas Bird’s-Eye Views, Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, TX

Charts, Graphs and Tables



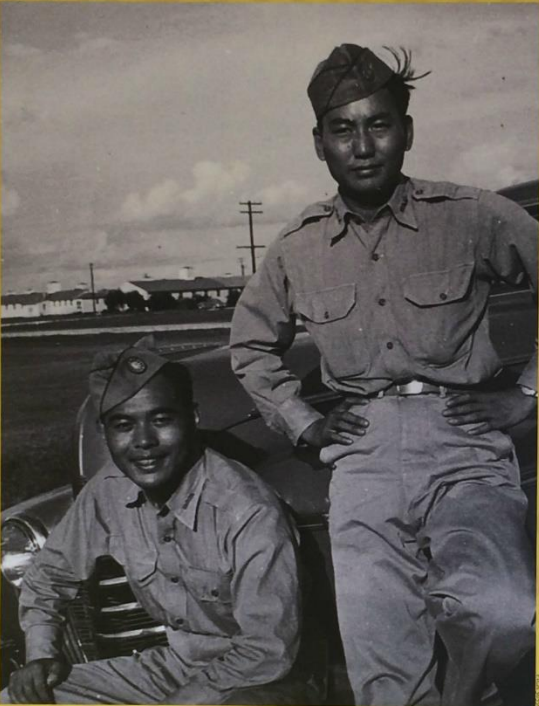
Images of Documents



Texas State Cemetery, Austin, TX

Images of Documents

1940s-50s
MILITARY SERVICE



During World War II, 100 Chinese military officers, fluent in English, came to America to serve as interpreters for Chinese pilots training for a top-secret mission. The FAB (Foreign Affairs Bureau)-100 were sent to military bases across America, and Kwei "Duke" Tu (on the right) was one of the officers sent to Bergstrom Army Air Field in Austin.

Austin's First Chinese Draftee To Leave Today

**Justice of Peace
Also Included In
Induction Group**

Austin's first Chinese registrant will leave with 35 other selectees of Travis county Friday at 2:30 p. m. for the induction center at Fort Sam Houston to begin one year of military training under the nation's selective service law.

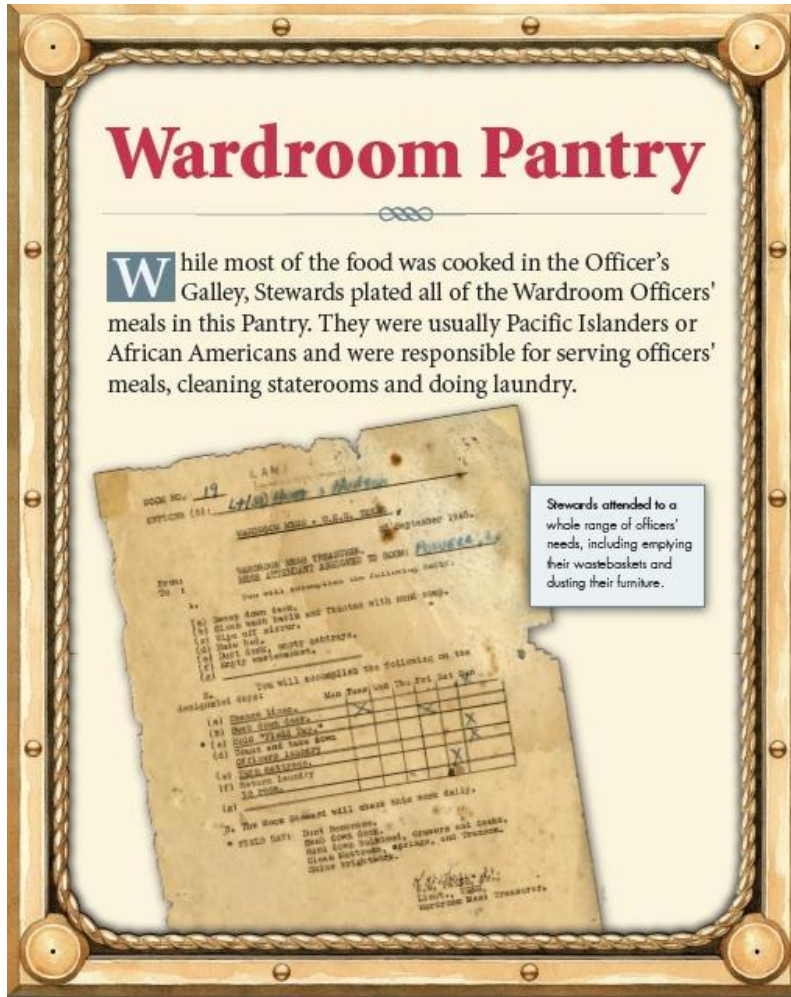
He is Chew Ah Leung, 33-year-old cook at Sam Wah cafe, 223 Congress avenue, who holds order No. 483. Chew was born in Canton, China, in 1907, but he has been in the United States since 1924 and has filed declaration of intention to become a citizen.

Another registrant leaving for the induction center Friday is Mace Baxter Thurman Jr., justice of the peace, Travis county, for Precinct 3, Place 2. Thurman announced that he will wait until his acceptance is announced before making any statement relative to his civil office here.

This article announces the first Chinese man to enter military service from Austin, **Chew Ah Leung**, a cook at Sam Wah Café. Mr. Leung was trained at Fort Sam Houston and served during World War II.

Waves of Hope: Asian American History in Austin, Asian American Resource Center, Austin, TX

Images of Documents



Battleship TEXAS State Historic Site, La Porte, TX

Photographs: The Basics



Donald Schoolhouse Museum, Grapevine, TX

Photographs: The Basics



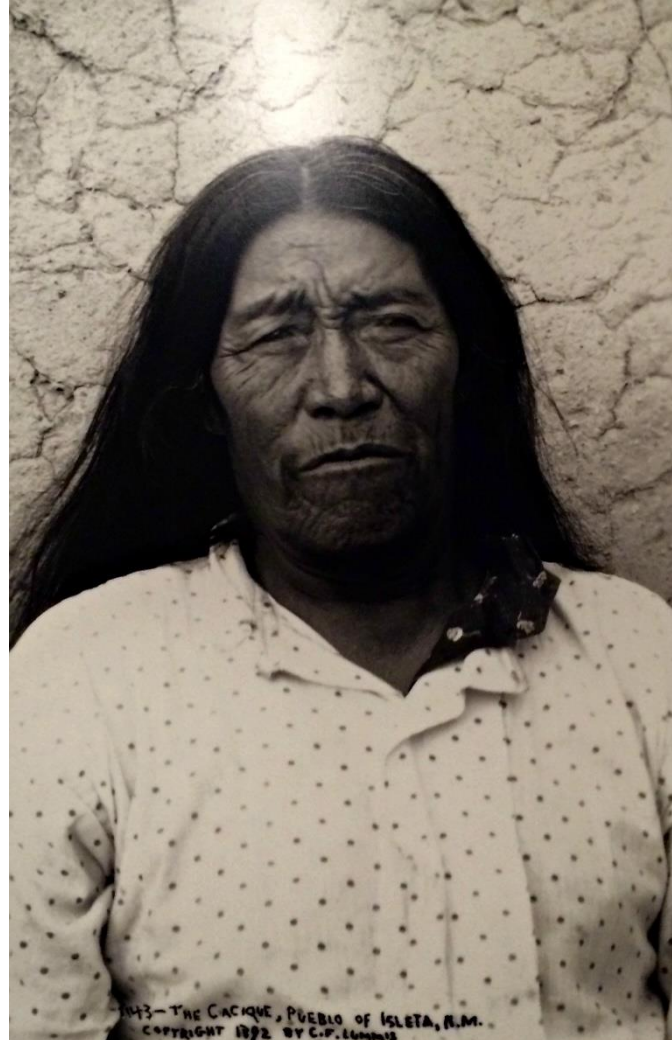
Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division

Photographs: The Basics



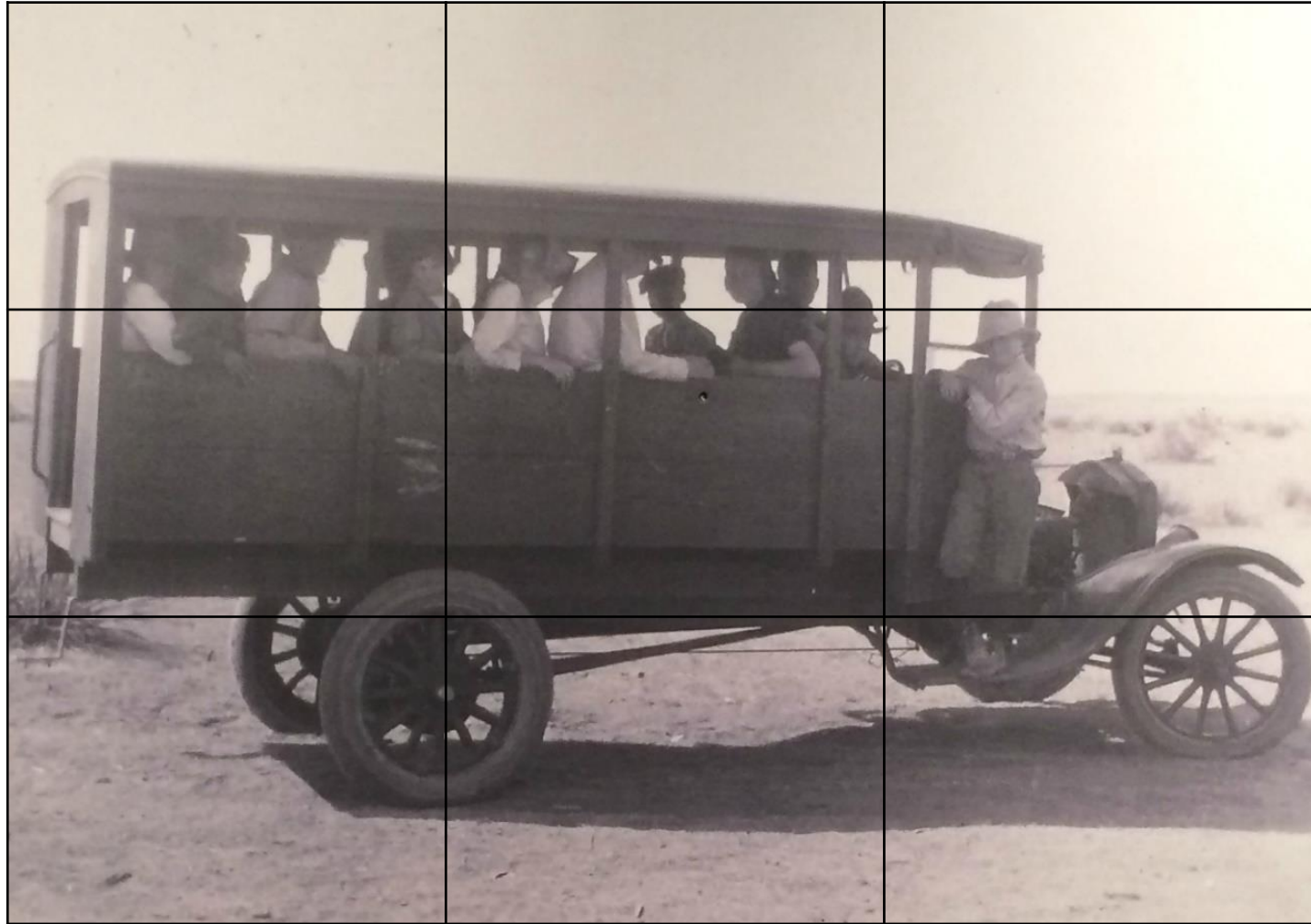
Time Exposures: Picturing Isleta Pueblo in the 19th Century, Museum of Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX

Photographs: Simple is Strong



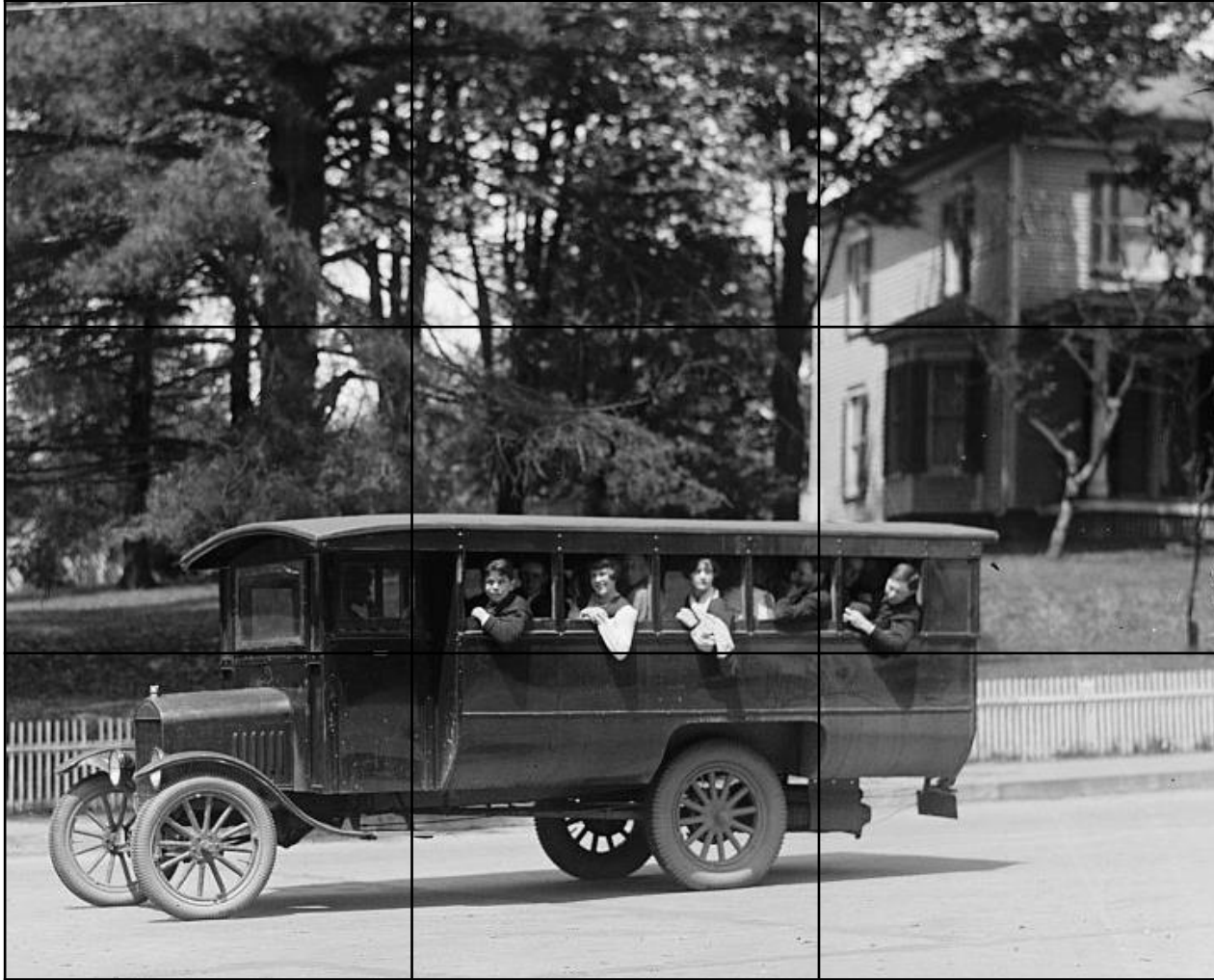
Time Exposures: Picturing Isleta Pueblo in the 19th Century, Museum of Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX

Photographs: The “Rule” of Thirds



From Horse-Drawn to Horsepower, National Ranching Heritage Center, Lubbock, TX

Photographs: The “Rule” of Thirds



Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division

Photographs: The “Rule” of Thirds



Photographs: Lines and Movement



Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division

Photographs: Lines and Movement



From Horse-Drawn to Horsepower, National Ranching Heritage Center, Lubbock, TX

Photographs: Lines and Movement



Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division

Photographs: Action Images



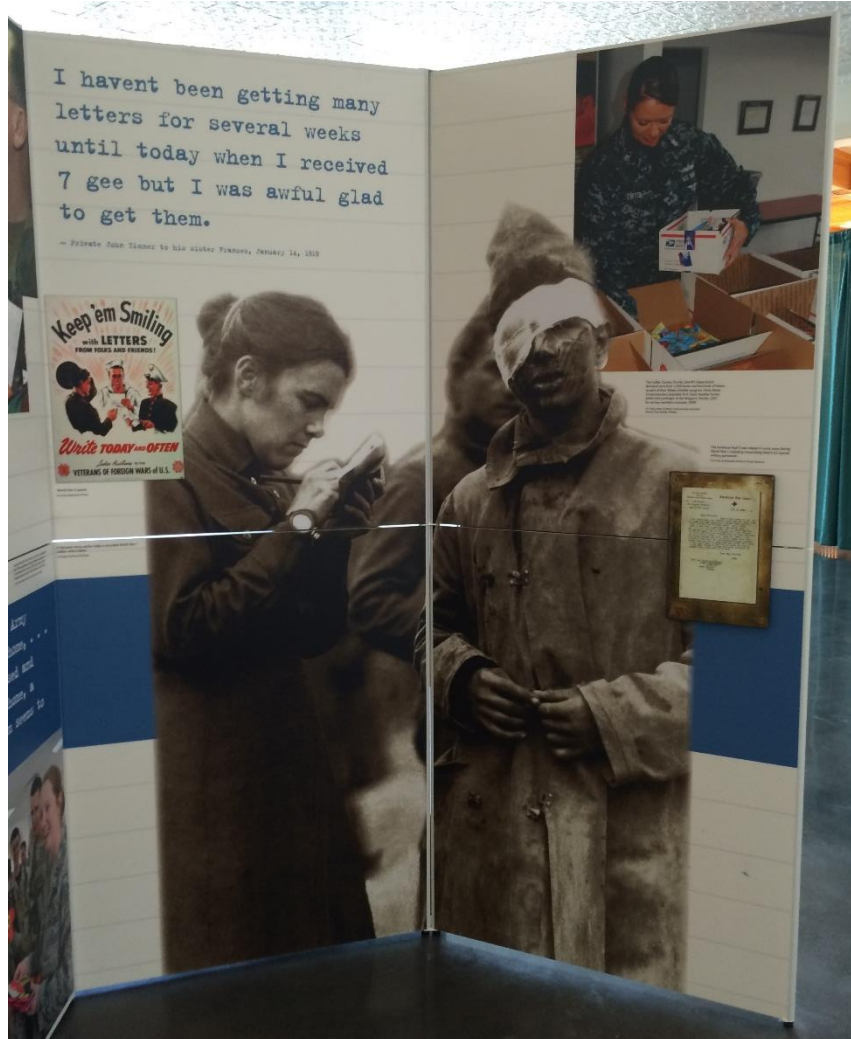
Outdoor interpretive sign, Garner State Park, Concan, TX

Photographs: Action Images



Outdoor interpretive sign, Garner State Park, Concan, TX

Photographs: Static Images



Mail Call, Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service, at Grapevine CVB, Grapevine, TX

Fonts: Serif vs. Sans Serif

Serif

- ▶ Serifs have “feet” or “tails” on the letters.
- ▶ Examples:
 - ▶ Garamond
 - ▶ Times New Roman
 - ▶ Bookman Old Style

Sans Serif

- ▶ Sans serif fonts lack the “feet” or “tails” on the letters.
- ▶ Examples:
 - ▶ **Franklin Gothic**
 - ▶ Tahoma
 - ▶ Arial

Fonts: Print vs. Web

Print

- ▶ Serif fonts are considered more legible in print.
- ▶ In general, use serif fonts for body copy and larger.
- ▶ Exception: serif fonts are harder to read at small size. Use sans serif fonts for smaller print (e.g., captions).

Web

- ▶ Sans serif fonts are considered more legible on screen.
- ▶ Use sans serif fonts at any size.

Fonts: Sizes

- ▶ Captions: 20 to 24-point type
- ▶ Body copy and Titles: 28 to 42-point type, depending on:
 - ▶ color of type
 - ▶ spacing between letters (kerning) and between lines (leading)
 - ▶ type of font (regular, bold, italic)

Note: the actual print size of a 20-point font will vary depending on the font. For example:

- ▶ Garamond at 20 point
- ▶ DilleniaUPC at 20 point

When using a font that runs on the smaller side, make sure you compensate for this by using it at a larger size.

Fonts: More Readable

- ▶ In general: regular typefaces (not **BOLD** or *italic*)
- ▶ Don't set text in ALL CAPS
- ▶ Serif fonts:
 - ▶ Times New Roman
 - ▶ New Century Schoolbook
- ▶ Sans serif fonts:
 - ▶ Helvetica
 - ▶ Univers 55
 - ▶ Futura

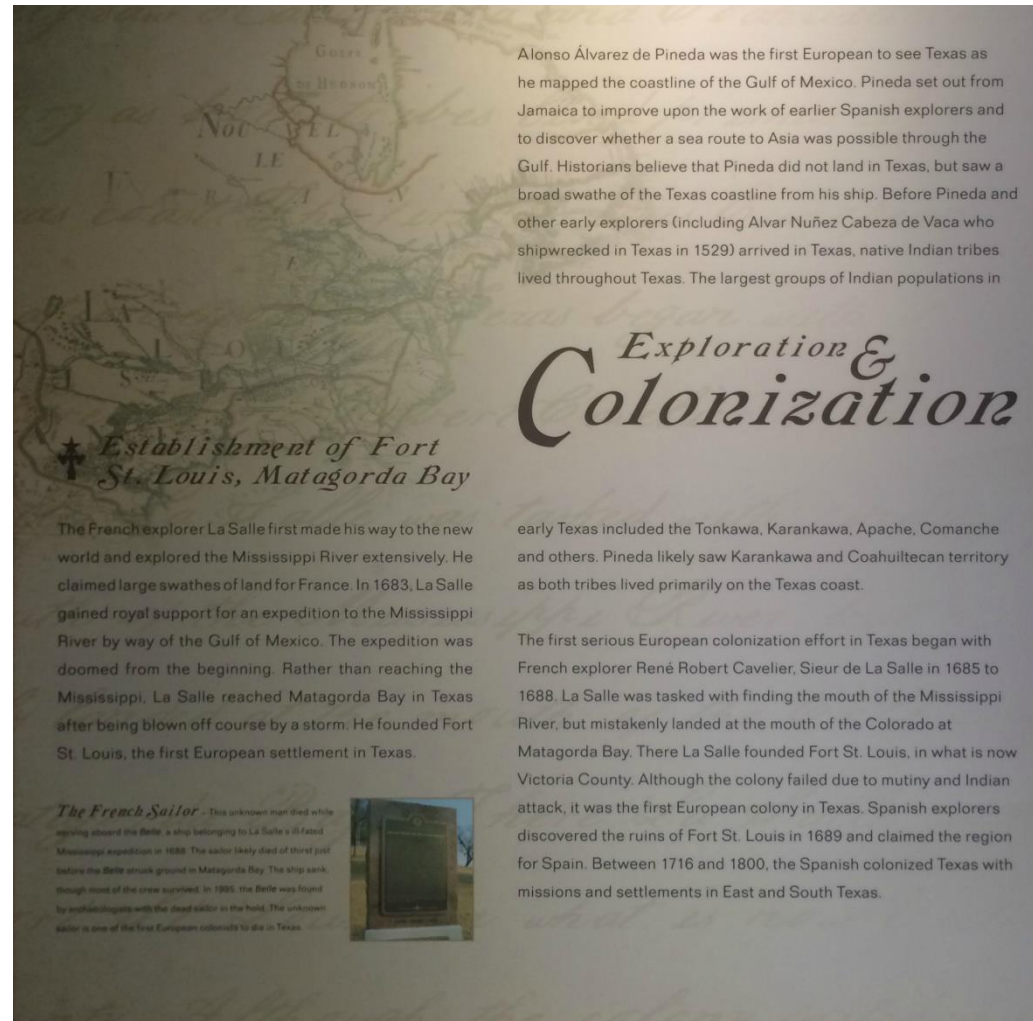
Source: Smithsonian Guidelines for Accessible Design

Fonts: Less Readable

- ▶ *Script* Because all the letters connect and contain flourishes, script fonts make it harder for the eye to distinguish one letter from the next. This makes these fonts harder to read overall.
- ▶ *Eroded* Eroded fonts don't have smooth edges, which makes it difficult for the eye to recognize the letter forms. Use them sparingly in both print and web applications.

These fonts all evoke a particular feeling or mood. There are some cases where they might be your best option. If you choose to use these types of fonts, use them sparingly and at a very large size, and recognize that you are sacrificing readability for some viewers.

Fonts: Less Readable



Texas State Cemetery, Austin, TX

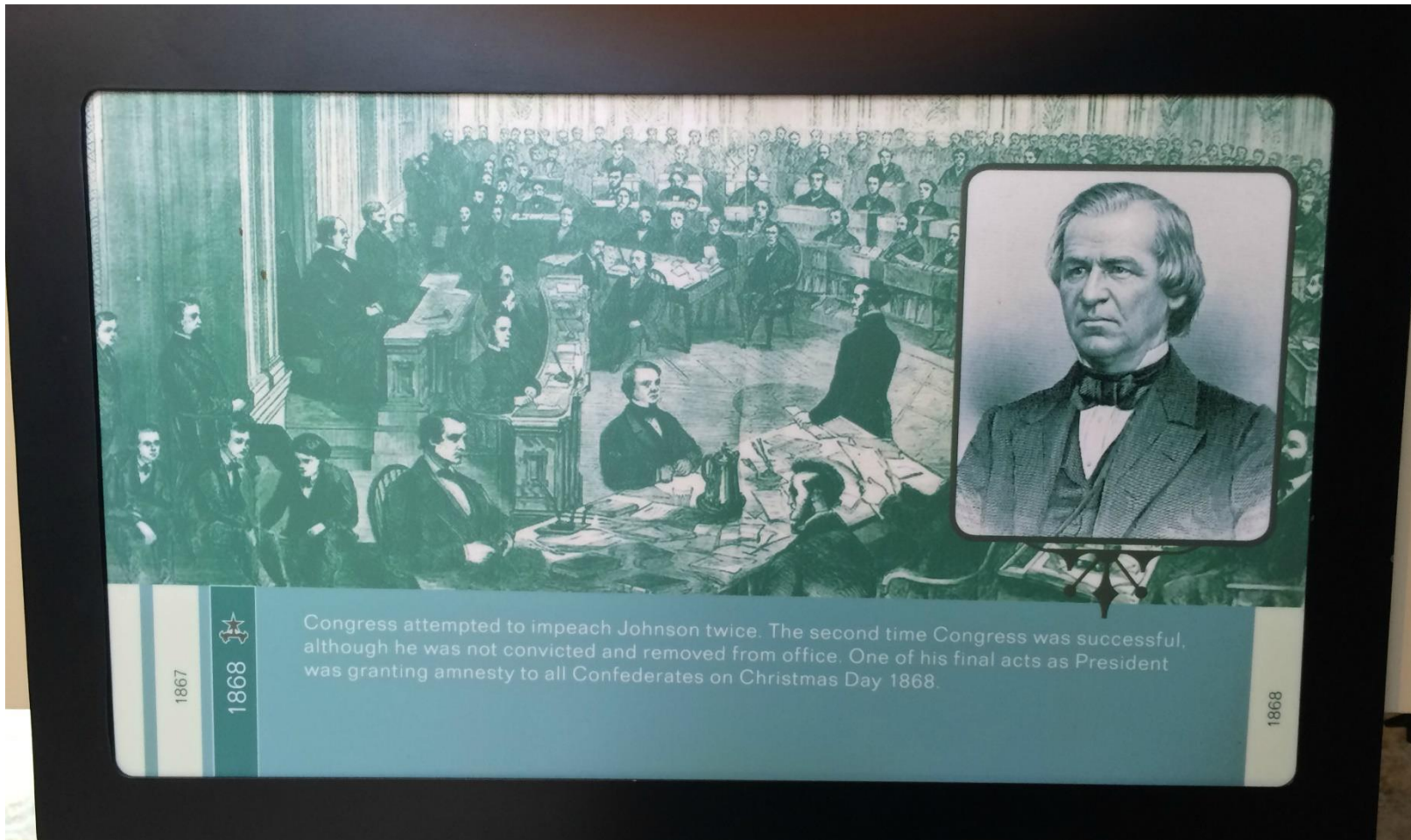
Fonts: Overused Fonts

Comic Sans

Papyrus

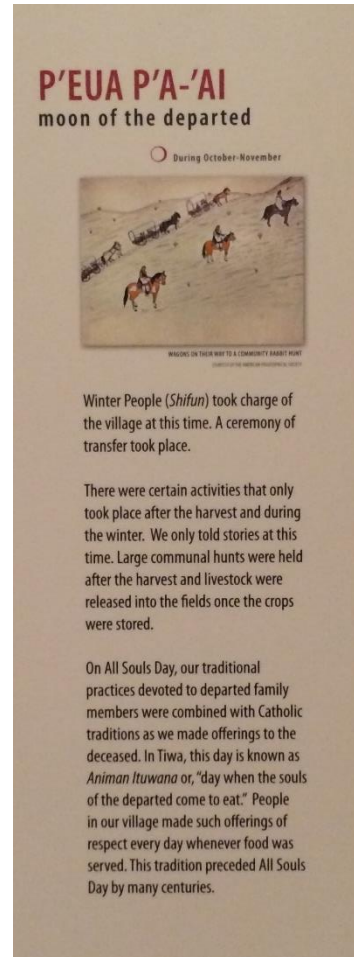
Looking for an alternative font? I often use www.dafont.com for free, downloadable fonts that are fully licensed for non-commercial use.

Composition: Balance



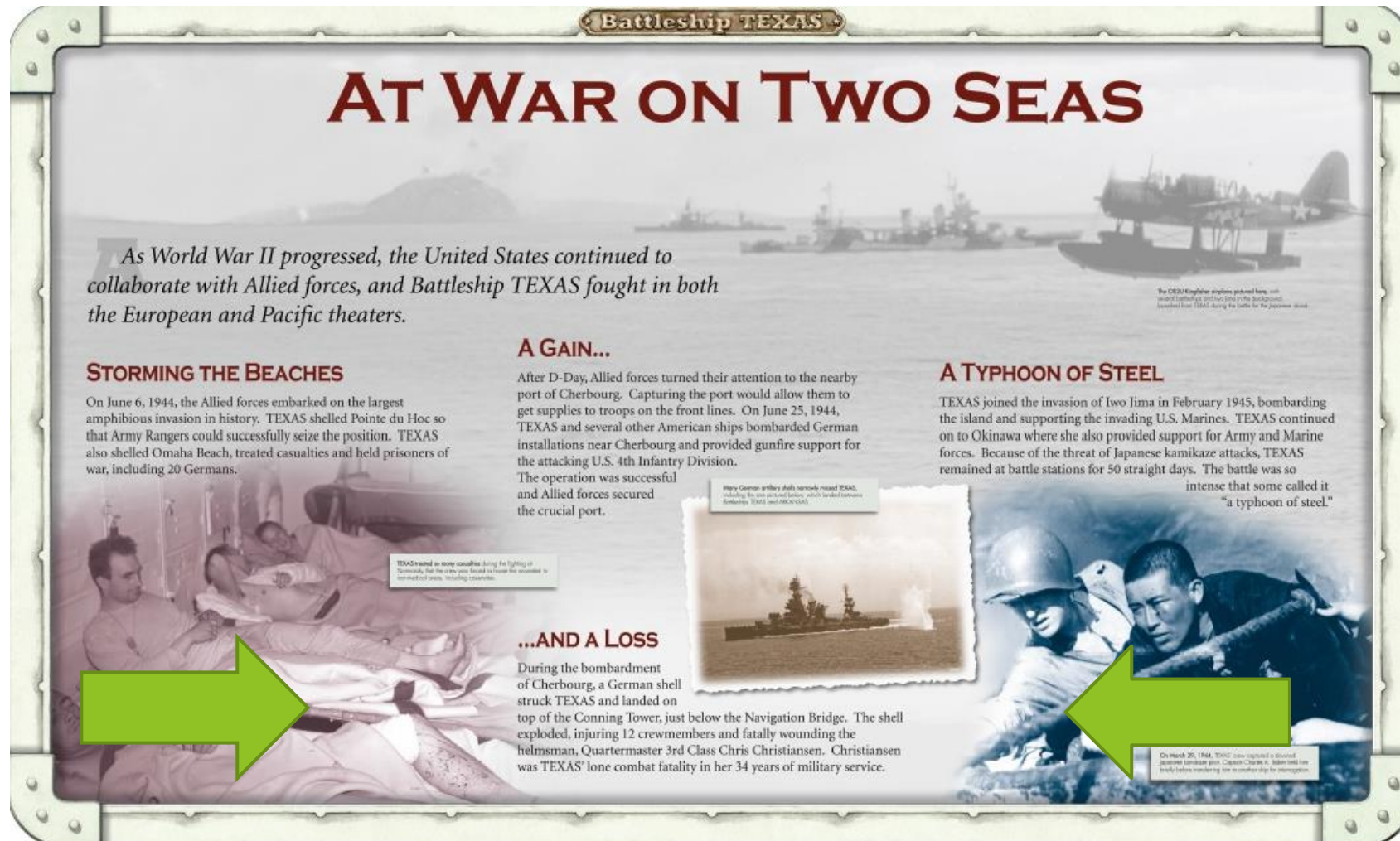
Congress attempted to impeach Johnson twice. The second time Congress was successful, although he was not convicted and removed from office. One of his final acts as President was granting amnesty to all Confederates on Christmas Day 1868.

Composition: Colors and Contrast



Time Exposures: Picturing Isleta Pueblo in the 19th Century, Museum of Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX

Composition: Image Orientation



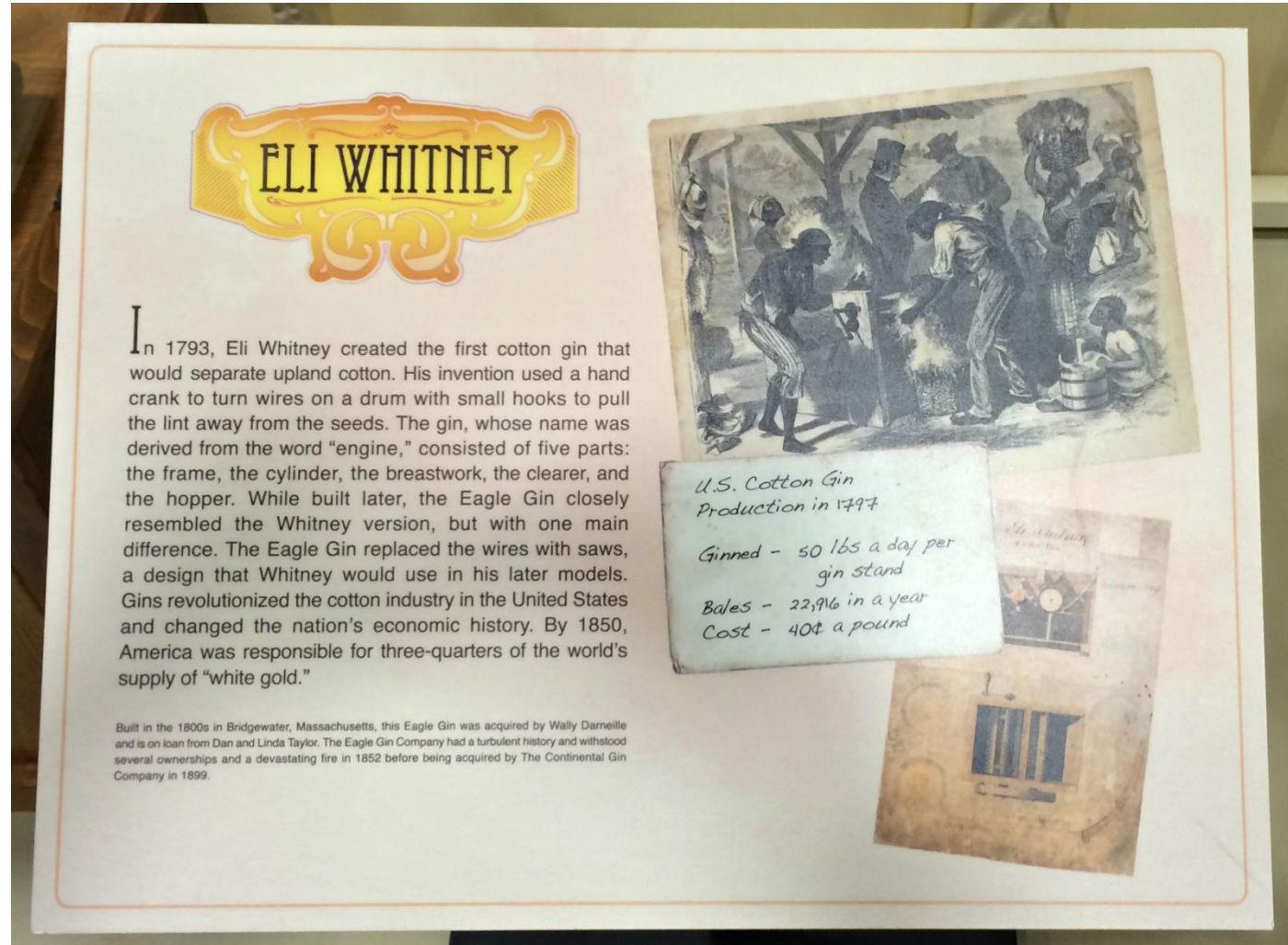
Battleship TEXAS State Historic Site, La Porte, TX

Composition: Capacity



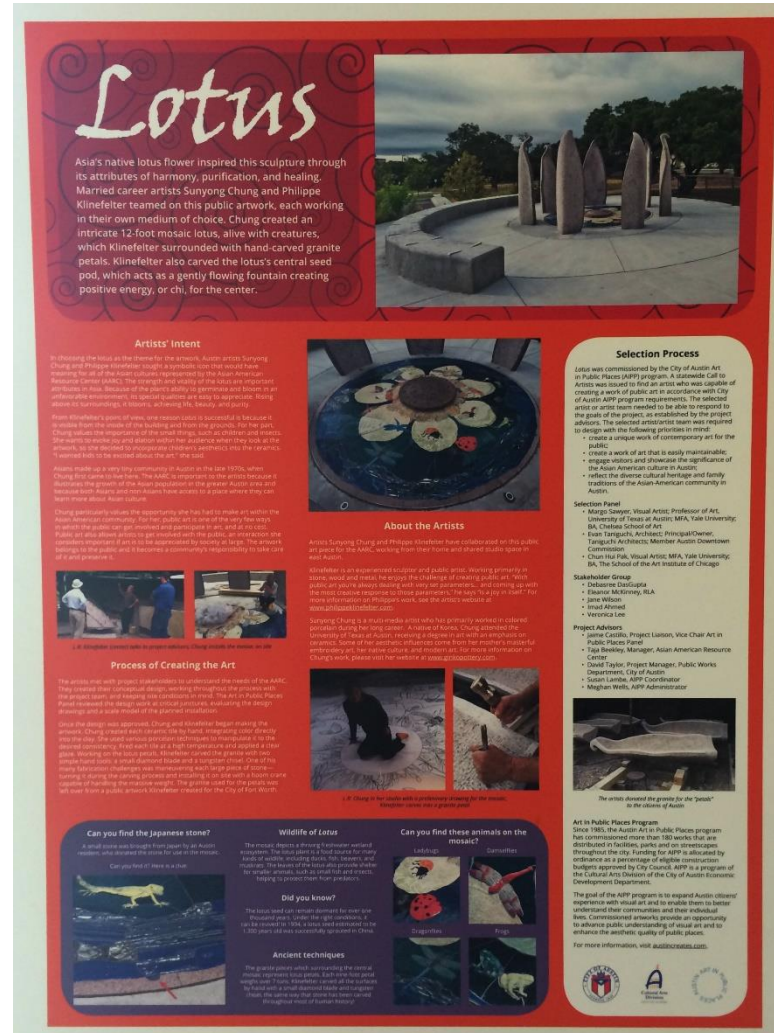
Tall Tales of the Wild West, National Ranching Heritage Center, Lubbock, TX

Composition: Capacity



Bayer Museum of Agriculture, Lubbock, TX

Composition: Capacity



Take-Aways

- ▶ Choose the right type of visual for your message.
- ▶ Look for simple, well-composed, and dynamic images.
- ▶ Rely on fonts that are highly readable (and limit use of those that are not).
- ▶ Think about balance, contrast, image orientation, and capacity when putting it all together.

Resources

Useful (free!) resources:

- ▶ PicMonkey (<http://www.picmonkey.com>): free web-based photo editing, good for touching up modern images.
- ▶ <http://www.dafonts.com>: downloads of all types of fonts, free licenses for non-commercial uses
- ▶ Colour Contrast Check (http://www.snook.ca/technical/colour_contrast/colour.html): check the contrast between your text (foreground) color and background color by inputting color values or using a slider to select your color. Sidebar tells you whether your contrast is at least 7:1.
- ▶ Smithsonian Guidelines for Accessible Exhibition Design (<http://accessible.si.edu/pdf/Smithsonian%20Guidelines%20for%20accessible%20design.pdf>)
- ▶ Library of Congress (<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/>): free image downloads, usually free of copyright issues)